Example Request for Proposal

Small Consortium (25 or less HCPs)
Leased Services

This example RFP is provided to guide applicants in preparing their own RFPs. Using this example as a template does not guarantee that the RFP will be approved by USAC. Applicants are responsible for reviewing FCC rules. Applications should pay particular attention to the following elements; conforming their RFP to meet the requirements of the Healthcare Connect Fund:

- 47 C.F.R. § 54.642, for competitive bidding requirements
- 47 C.F.R. § 54.634, for eligible services
- 47 C.F.R. § 54.635, for eligible equipment
- 47 C.F.R. § 54.636, HCP owned network facilities (for consortium applicants)
- 47 C.F.R. § 54.637, off-site data centers and off-site administrative offices
- 47 C.F.R. § 54.638, upfront payments
- 47 C.F.R. § 54.639, ineligible expenses
- 47 C.F.R. § 54.646, site and service substitutions

**Request for Proposal**
**[Consortium Name]**
**FCC Healthcare Connect Fund**

The [Consortium Name], on behalf of [#] hospital members of the consortium, is seeking bids for telecom services under the FCC's Healthcare Connect Fund. The [Consortium Name] is a consortium of [#] health care networks representing approximately [#] health care facilities. It is the vision of the [Consortium Name] to enable a set of standard telehealth connection services throughout [the State] that will facilitate any healthcare location in the state to share one or more telehealth services with any other healthcare location within [the State], and ultimately, to interconnect with other health care providers regionally and nationally.

This RFP addresses the telecommunications, perimeter hardware, and network maintenance for [#] facilities in the consortium that are seeking new or enhanced services. Simultaneous with the build outs identified herein, the [Consortium Name] will develop network architecture and routing to address the overall vision for the remaining sites in the consortium and the [Consortium's] network. Sites addressed by services provided in this RFP will then be prepared to participate in further network building addressed by the [Consortium] network implementation plan.

**[The Consortium]** is a non-profit healthcare consortium of [#] rural health care providers in [the State] and [#] healthcare organizations in [a neighboring state]. It provides services to its members, including: educational programs for members and trustees, preferred vendor contracts, networking opportunities, physician and ancillary staff recruitment, collection agency services, and annual wage and benefit surveys. The connectivity provided will continue to build member capacity to electronically exchange health information and engage in telemedicine services. [The Consortium] is requesting services for its members that currently do not have adequate telecommunication capacity to handle facility demands.

In 20[XX],[the Consortium] was the recipient of a USDA Distance Learning and Telemedicine grant. Under this grant, they were able to purchase videoconferencing equipment for the purposes of building distance learning and telemedicine opportunities. In 20[XX], [a health network], a subset of [#] hospitals in the consortium, received a grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration to implement a shared electronic health record system. The services in those hospitals currently do not support exchange of patient data, images, or other records. In addition, they are poised to complete installation of videoconferencing equipment purchased under USDA funding, but do not have the telecommunications capacity to employ the system.

**Requested services.** This request for proposal establishes new private site connections at [# of HCP] member sites that currently have inadequate connectivity for their needs. Other sites in the consortium have established adequate connections, but they are not interoperable, which will be addressed in the overall network architecture of [the Consortium]. There will also be a direct connection to the [Consortium] managing entity, [the Consortium Leader].

The services requested will provide connectivity to each site as specified in Table 1.1 and network diagram, attached. The configuration must support quality of service (QoS), specifically DSCP prioritization end to end for telehealth and secure reliable connections for electronic health information exchange. Eventually the connectivity will be able to provide additional services to [Consortium] members for a converged IP network that will consolidate many technologies into one platform. The successful bidder(s) will support routes for existing services at the original sites and referral hospitals and clinics to provide a seamless transition to their bandwidth solution(s). The hardware for the connections will be purchased and configured through the successful bidder(s) to support these routes.

Any ongoing changes to the hardware will be done by the managing entity, [the Consortium Leader].

Telecom service options for remaining end-user sites should reflect overall pricing, quality standards, and network-wide service requirements as described below and in Table 1.1. Bids must be responsive to service needs established by end-user hospitals in Table 1.1. All sites will route to [Data Center location] which will eventually link all [Consortium] sites. A DS3 connection to [the Consortium Leader] will allow the [Consortium] sites to interoperate with other health care providers in [the State] and beyond. All site connections are listed in Table 1.1 and the Form 461 attachment, which incorporates this RFP.

The vendor(s) will be responsible for all network hardware purchasing and maintenance in accordance with the site needs in Table 1.1. The existing [Consortium] sites will connect via T-1 circuits with router and T-1 port capacity to accommodate the bandwidth needed for each site as defined. The vendor(s) must deliver connectivity over a private data network in a secure and prioritized fashion on an Internet Protocol (IP) platform. Vendor(s) may be required to purchase local access from the local exchange carrier to complete last-mile connectivity to nearest POP. The end user site would be responsible for internal wiring and connection to the room locations where the telehealth equipment will be located (note to vendor: this expense is not an eligible expense in the Healthcare Connect Fund and the participating HCPs will be 100% for the internal wiring expense). The vendor will be responsible for all network hardware purchasing and maintenance in accordance with the site needs in Table 1.1 and the parts list included. The vendor shall provide network services in a manner that meets HIPAA requirements concerning telecommunications.

**Quality of Service (QoS) -** All local access circuits and Vendor's core infrastructure network should be designed to deliver QoS, specifically DSCP from end-to-end. Vendor will be required to prioritize traffic with QoS to ensure packet delivery and latency remains at or above industry standards for the routing protocols as well as for switching.

**Network IP services should support:** *(As a requirement the vendor must be able to guarantee that the requested services are included in the SLA/contract for* ***each*** *connection that will be made. If the parameters cannot be met after the point of implementation, the [Consortium] reserves the right to terminate any and all contracts, based on the fact that services are not being met as specified.)*

1. Specified bandwidth for each site and hardware necessary in Table 1.1
2. Administrative network security policy and operational requirements for data transport that meets HIPAA security and privacy requirements of State and Federal regulations and statutes.
3. Support for standards-based encryption protocols.
4. Requirements defined for common technical standards and operational procedures to maintain system reliability, relevant parameters include:
   i) An average end to centralized [Consortium] hub site delay of less than (<) 20 millisecond.
   ii) Provide less than (<) 0.1% packet loss.
   iii) Provide less than (<) 20 millisecond jitter (delay variance).
   iv) Provide greater than or equal to 99.99% network availability.

Proposed system testing and acceptance provisions will be required on all bid proposals. The [Consortium/Consortium Leader] reserves the right to work in concert with vendors to develop appropriate test and acceptance criteria for a specific installation or configuration, to be defined and accepted by both parties prior to contract initiation.

**IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE DESCRIPTION**
Any network build-out that is required by the responding bidder, is preferred to occur prior to any inclement weather or winter conditions, and therefore any construction should begin in [specified time frame]. Please include a plan with timeline, and address ability to meet project timeline goals. Identify circumstances that may create project delays.

**PRICING AND COST INFORMATION**
Vendors submitting proposals should identify all costs associated with the solution they are quoting. All hardware **MUST BE** new and not refurbished equipment.

All equipment in Table 1.1 and accompanying parts list must be used. The configurations are based on Cisco Systems products. Whenever the name of a manufacturer, trade name, brand name, or model and catalog numbers followed by the words "or equal" or "approved equal" are used in the specifications it is for the purpose of item identification and to establish standards of quality, style, and features. Bids on equivalent items of the same quality are invited. However, to receive consideration, such equivalent bids must be accompanied by sufficient descriptive literature and/or specifications to clearly identify the item and provide for competitive evaluation. Quotes should include the following:

1. Implementation fees, including purchase of required new hardware for end-to-end connectivity and initial configuration of network hardware.
2. Ongoing transmission fees for end-to-end connectivity.
3. Ongoing manufacturer maintenance for the new hardware that will be purchased from Cisco 24 x7 x 4 Smart net support for 3 years.
4. Any other costs associated with the solution that may add cost to participants.

Bid proposals should identify all costs that are included in bid in sufficient detail as to confirm the proposed solution, including installation, configuration, maintenance and any recurring costs, complies with the Healthcare Connect Fund's eligibility requirements.

Purchase price for each unit. Bundled pricing may be cited, but individual components must be identified and detailed pricing provided. Shipping cost for each unit or shipment shall be included as well.

All subcontracting shall be pre-approved by [the Consortium]. The Prime Contractor/Bidder shall be responsible for all subcontractor(s) work and payment. [The Consortium/Consortium Leader] will not pay any subcontractor or third parties directly. Proof of release of liens of subcontractors will need to be submitted prior to invoice approval.

A deadline for bid submissions will be 28 days after the posting of the Form 461 on the USAC web site. Program rules require the Form 461 and RFP to be posted for a minimum of 28 days, meaning that at a minimum a contract could not be signed until the 29th day after posting of the RFP. You must submit [x] copies of your proposal in hard copy format to [Consortium Leader], c/o: [Program Coordinator, contact information].

All bid proposals must understand and acknowledge USAC invoicing requirements and formats. Bidder will conform to invoicing procedures and processes as promulgated by USAC. Any successful bidder(s) is required to have a current Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN) as required by the Healthcare Connect Fund Order. A SPIN number may be obtained by contacting the Universal Services Administrative Company (www.usac.org)

All costs may not qualify for HCF funding. It is critical that accurate, detailed cost information should be provided for all portions of the bid proposal.

In order to obtain funding for the services and equipment being requested through this RFP, the consortium is subject to the rules and regulations of the FCC Healthcare Connect Fund program. Vendors must meet all program requirements. Once [the Consortium] has submitted its' Form 461 and this RFP it will be posted to the USAC website. More information on bidding and posting rules can be found at: http://www.usac.org/rhc/healthcare-connect/default.aspx

**PROPOSAL EVALUATION**

Any and all costs incurred by Vendor(s) in preparing and submitting a proposal are the Vendor(s) responsibility and **shall not** be charged to the [Consortium] or reflected as an expense of the resulting contracts. Proposed vendor responses will be based on but not limited to the following:

- Equipment solution (20 points)
- Network IP Services such as QoS, DSCP and H.323 (20 points)
- Proposed implementation time frames (10 points)
- Solution functions and features and suitability of vendor(s) solution(s) to meet project goals (20 points)
- Cost of solution, both start-up construction and ongoing services (30 points)

The selection will be based on all factors indicated in this section, and may not go to the lowest bidder if cost is outweighed by a combination of other features in the winning vendor's bid. The point scale listed above will determine the most cost-effective solution for [the Consortium]'s members.

The [Consortium] reserves the right to select bid proposals which, in the sole judgment of the [Consortium & Consortium Leader], most nearly conforms to the specifications set forth herein.

The [Consortium/Consortium Leader] reserves the right to waive any and all issues of form or presentation in considering bid presentations for acceptance or rejection, if, in the sole opinion of the [Consortium & the Consortium Leader], such waiver is in the best interests of the project.

The [Consortium] is not responsible for any costs incurred by a vendor related to the preparation or delivery of the bid proposal, or any other activities carried out by the vendor as it relates to this RFP.

Changes in applicable laws and rules may affect the award process or any resulting contracts. Vendors are responsible for ascertaining pertinent legal requirements and restrictions. Vendors are encouraged to visit the official FCC website pertaining to the Healthcare Connect Fund, at: http://www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/rural-health-care#HCF

The selection decisions made by [Consortium & Consortium Leader] and reported to USAC under this RFP are final, and appeals or re-submissions will not be considered.

[The Consortium Leader], representing the [Consortium] facilities reserves the right to issue any resulting order with the vendor(s) whose proposal, in the judgment of the group, most nearly conforms to the specifications and will best serve the needs of the [Consortium] participant members included in this request. [The Consortium Leader] on behalf the [Consortium] are not obligated to accept any proposal received. It may accept proposals in whole or in part, or may reject all proposals.

**CONTACT ON THIS RFP: Project Coordinator**

Address 1
Address 2
City, State, Zip
Phone Number
Fax Number
Email address

**ATTACHMENTS**
Table 1.1
Network Map

## TABLE 1.1

| HCP Name | Connection | Termination Point | Router | Switch |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | T1 - 5Mb | | Cisco 2821 or equal | 48 port - Cisco 3560 PoE orr equal |
| | T1 - 5Mb | | Cisco 2821 or equal | 48 port - Cisco 3560 PoE or equal |
| | T1 - 5Mb | | Cisco 2821 or equal | 48 port - Cisco 3560 PoE or equal |
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| | T1 - 5Mb | | Cisco 2821 or equal | 48 port - Cisco 3560 PoE or equal |
| | T1 - 5Mb | | Cisco 2821 or equal | 48 port - Cisco 3560 PoE or equal |
| | T1 - 5Mb | | Cisco 2821 or equal | 48 port - Cisco 3560 PoE or equal |
| | DS3-Clear Channel | | ASR 1004 or approved equal | 48 port - Cisco 3560 PoE or equal |

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**Hardware: Cisco ASR1004 Router or equivalent**

| Quantity | Product | Description |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | ASR1004 | Cisco ASR1004 Chassis, Dual P/S |
| 2 | ASR1000-ESP10 | Cisco ASR1000 Embedded Services Processor 10G, Crypto |
| 1 | ASR1000-RP1 | Cisco ASR1000 Route Processor 1, 2GB DRAM |
| 1 | M-ASR1K-RP-4GB | Cisco ASR1000 RP1 4GB DRAM |
| 1 | M-ASR1K-HDD-40GB | Cisco ASR1000 RP1 40GB HDD |
| 1 | ASR1000-RP1 | Cisco ASR1000 Route Processor 1, 2GB DRAM |
| 1 | M-ASR1K-RP-4GB | Cisco ASR1000 RP1 4GB DRAM |
| 1 | M-ASR1K-HDD-40GB | Cisco ASR1000 RP1 40GB HDD |
| 1 | ASR1000-SIP10 | Cisco ASR-1000 SPA Interface Processor 10 |
| 1 | MEMUSB-1024FT | 1GB USB Flash Token for Cisco ASR 1000 Series |
| 1 | SASR1R1-AISK9 | Cisco ASR 1000 Series RP1 Advanced IP Services |
| 2 | SPA-8XCHT1/E1 | Cisco 8-port Channelized T1/E1 Shared Port Adapter |
| 1 | SPA-8X1GE-V2 | Cisco 8-port Gigabit Ethernet Shared Port Adapter, Version 2 |
| 1 | SPA-2XCT3/DS0 | 2-port Channelized T3 to DS0 Shared Port Adapter |
| 2 | ASR1004-PWR-AC | Cisco ASR1004 AC Power Supply |
| 2 | CAB-AC | Power Cord |
| 1 | ASR1000-Rack Kit | Cisco Rack Kit for ASR1000 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | ASR1000-SPA | SPA for ASR1000, No Physical Part, For Tracking Only |
| 1 | ASR1000-SPA | SPA for ASR1000, No Physical Part, For Tracking Only |
| 1 | ASR1000-SPA | SPA for ASR1000, No Physical Part, For Tracking Only |
| 6 | CON-SNTP-ASRESP10 | SMARTNET 24X7X4 Cisco ASR1000 Embedded Services Processor |
| 3 | CON-SNTP-ASRRP1 | SMARTNET 24X7X4 Cisco ASR1000 Route Processor 1,2GB DRAM |
| 3 | CON-SNTP-ASRRP1 | SMARTNET 24X7X4 Cisco ASR1000 Route Processor 1,2GB DRAM |
| 3 | CON-SNTP-ASRSIP10 | SMARTNET 24X7X4 Cisco ASR1000 SPA Interface Processor 10 |
| 3 | CON-SNTP-ASR1K4 | SMARTNET 24X7X4 Cisco ASR1004 Chassis, Dual P/S |
| 3 | CON-SNTP-ASRAISK | SMARTNET 24X7X4 Cisco ASR 1000 Series RP1 ADV IP SERVICE |
| 3 | CON-SNTP-8X1GEV2 | SMARTNET 24X7X4 8-Port Gigabit Ethernet Shared Port Adapter |
| 6 | CON-SNTP-8XCHT1E1 | SMARTNET 24X7X4 8Prt Channel T1/E1 |
| 3 | CON-SNTP-2XCT3DSO | SMARTNET 24X7X4 2-port Channelized T3 to DS0 Shared |

### Hardware: Cisco 2821 Router or equivalent

| Product | Description |
|---|---|
| C2821-WAE/K9 | 2821 SEC Bundle WAE-502 NM,Adv IP Serv,128F/256D |
| S28NRAISK9-12415T | Cisco 2800 AISK9-AISK9 FEAT SET FACTORY UPG FOR |
| BUNDLES MEM2821-256U512D | 256 to 512MB DDR DRAM factory upgrade for the Cisco 2821 |
| MAX-28/38-FLASH-BN | 64 to 256 MB CF Factory Upgrade and 256MB USB Flash Token for 2800/3800 |
| PWR-2821-51-AC-IP | Cisco 2821/51 AC/IP power supply |
| CAB-AC | Power Cord,110V |
| VWIC2-2MFT-T1/E1 | 2-Port T1/E1 Voice/WAN with Drop & Insert |
| NME-WAE-3020-K9 | Cisco (WAAS) Network Module w/80 GB hard drive and 512MB memory |
| S28NAISK9 | Cisco 2800 Advanced IP Services K9 |
| ROUTER-SDM | Device manager for routers |
| MEM2800-64U256CF | 64 to 256 MB CF Factory Upgrade for Cisco 2800 Series |
| MEM2800-256D-INC | 256MB DDR DRAM Memory factory default for the Cisco 2800 |
| CON-SNT-2821SRST | 3 years SNT 8x5xNBD SmartNet |

### Hardware: Cisco 3560 48 Port POE Switch or equivalent

| Product | Description |
|---|---|
| WS-3560-48PS-S | Cisco 3560 48 Port POE Switch |
| CON-SNTP-3560 | 3 years SNT 8x5xNBD |

[Insert map showing the various locations requesting services in this RFP]